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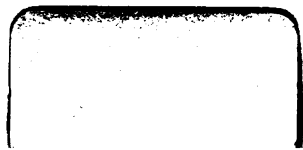
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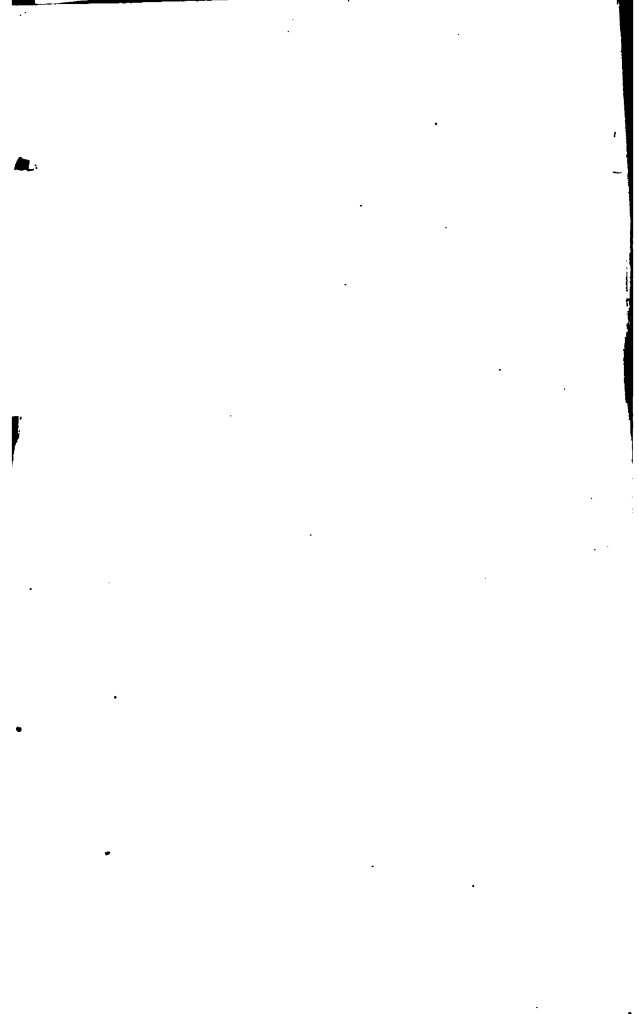
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1. Poetry, American



NB1
Longfellow



The Courtship
of Miles Standish



Collection of "Masterpieces."

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

The Courtship of Miles Standish

*With numerous original
illustrations by*

WALTER RUSSELL



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I.

Miles Standish.

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The Courtship of Miles Standish.

I.

MILES STANDISH.

IN the Old Colony days, in Plymouth the land
of the Pilgrims,
To and fro in a room of his simple and prim-
itive dwelling,
Clad in doublet and hose, and boots of Cordo-
van leather,
Strode, with a martial air, Miles Standish the
Puritan Captain.
Buried in thought he seemed, with his hands
behind him, and pausing
Ever and anon to behold his glittering weapons
of warfare,
Hanging in shining array along the walls of
the chamber,—

Cutlass and corslet of steel, and his trusty
sword of Damascus,
Curved at the point and inscribed with its
mystical Arabic sentence,



While underneath, in a corner,
were fowling-piece, musket,
and matchlock.

Short of stature he was, but
strongly built and athletic,
Broad in the shoulders, deep-
chested, with muscles and
sinews of iron ;

Brown as a nut was his face, but
his russet beard was already
Flaked with patches of snow, as
hedges sometimes in Novem-
ber.

Near him was seated John Alden,
his friend, and household
companion,

Writing with diligent speed at a
table of pine by the win-
dow ;

Fair-haired, azure-eyed, with delicate Saxon
complexion,

Having the dew of his youth, and the beauty
thereof, as the captives

Whom Saint Gregory saw, and exclaimed,
"Not Angles but Angels."

Youngest of all was he of the men who came
in the May Flower.



"MILES STANDISH."

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P L

.....
Suddenly breaking the silence, the diligent
scribe interrupting,
Spake, in the pride of his heart, Miles Standish
the Captain of Plymouth.
"Look at these arms," he said, "the warlike
weapons that hang here
Burnished and bright and clean, as if for pa-
rade or inspection!
This is the sword of Damascus I fought with
in Flanders ; this breastplate,
Well I remember the day ! once saved my life
in a skirmish ;
Here in front you can see the very dint of the
bullet
Fired point-blank at my heart by a Spanish
arcabucero.
Had it not been of sheer steel, the forgotten
bones of Miles Standish
Would at this moment be mould, in their grave
in the Flemish morasses."
Thereupon answered John Alden, but looked
not up from his writing:
"Truly the breath of the Lord hath slackened
the speed of the bullet ;
He in his mercy preserved you, to be our shield
and our weapon !"
Still the Captain continued, unheeding the
words of the stripling :
"See, how bright they are burnished, as if in
an arsenal hanging ;
That is because I have done it myself, and not
left it to others.

Serve yourself, would you be well served, is
an excellent adage;

So I take care of my arms, as you of your pens
and your ink-horn.

Then, too, there are my soldiers, my great, in-
vincible army,

Twelve men, all equipped, having each his rest
and his matchlock,

Eighteen shillings a month, together with diet
and pillage,

And, like Cæsar, I know the name of each of
my soldiers!"

This he said with a smile, that danced in his
eyes, as the sunbeams

Dance on the waves of the sea, and vanish
again in a moment.

Alden laughed as he wrote, and still the Cap-
tain continued :

"Look! you can see from this window my
brazen howitzer planted

High on the roof of the church, a preacher
who speaks to the purpose,

Steady, straight-forward, and strong, with
irresistible logic,

Orthodox, flashing conviction right into the
hearts of the heathen.

Now we are ready, I think, for any assault of
the Indians ;

Let them come, if they like, and the sooner
they try it the better,—

Let them come if they like, be it sagamore,
sachem, or pow-wow,

Aspinet, Samoset, Corbitant, Squanto or Tokamahamon !”

Long at the window he stood, and wistfully
gazed on the landscape,
Washed with a cold grey mist, the vapory
breath of the east-wind,



“ HOWITZER PLANTED HIGH ON THE ROOF OF
THE CHURCH.”

Forest and meadow and hill, and the steel-blue
rim of the ocean,
Lying silent and sad, in the afternoon shadows
and sunshine.

Over his countenance flitted a shadow like
those on the landscape,
Gloom intermingled with light ; and his voice
was subdued with emotion,
Tenderness, pity, regret, as after a pause he
proceeded :
"Yonder there, on the hill by the sea, lies
buried Rose Standish ;
Beautiful rose of love, that bloomed for me by
the wayside !
She was the first to die of all who came in the
May Flower !
Green above her is growing the field of wheat
we have sown there,
Better to hide from the Indian scouts the
graves of our people,
Lest they should count them and see how many
already have perished !"
Sadly his face he averted, and strode up and
down, and was thoughtful.

Fixed to the opposite wall was a shelf of
books, and among them
Prominent three, distinguished alike for bulk
and for binding ;
Bariffe's Artillery Guide, and the Commenta-
ries of Cæsar,
Out of the Latin translated by Arthur Goldinge
of London,
And, as if guarded by these, between them
was standing the Bible.

Musing a moment before them, Miles Standish
paused, as if doubtful
Which of the three he should choose for his
consolation and comfort,



"A SHELF OF BOOKS."

Whether the wars of the Hebrews, the famous
campaigns of the Romans,
Or the Artillery practice, designed for belliger-
ent Christians.

Finally down from its shelf he dragged the
ponderous Roman,
Seated himself at the window, and opened the
book, and in silence
Turned o'er the well-worn leaves, where
thumb-marks thick on the margin,
Like the trample of feet, proclaimed the battle
was hottest.
Nothing was heard in the room but the hurry-
ing pen of the stripling,
Busily writing epistles important, to go by the
May Flower,
Ready to sail on the morrow, or next day at
latest, God willing !
Homeward bound with the tidings of all
that terrible winter,
Letters written by Alden, and full of the
name of Priscilla,
Full of the name and the fame of the Puritan
maiden Priscilla !

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II.

Love and Friendship.



II.

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP.

NOTHING was heard in the room but the
hurrying pen of the stripling,
Or an occasional sigh from the labouring heart
of the Captain,

Reading the marvellous words and achieve-
ments of Julius Cæsar.

After a while he exclaimed, as he smote with
his hand, palm downwards,

Heavily on the page : "A wonderful man was
this Cæsar !

You are a writer, and I am a fighter, but here
is a fellow

Who could both write and fight, and in both
was equally skilful !"

Straightway answered and spake John Alden,
the comely, the youthful :

"Yes, he was equally skilled, as you say, with
his pen and his weapons.

Somewhere have I read, but where I forget,
he could dictate

Seven letters at once, at the same time writing
his memoirs."

"Truly," continued the Captain, not heeding
or hearing the other,

"Truly a wonderful man was Caius Julius
Cæsar !

Better be first, he said, in a little Iberian
village,

Than be second in Rome, and I think he was
right when he said it.

Twice was he married before he was twenty,
and many times after ;

Battles five hundred he fought, and a thousand
cities he conquered ;

He, too, fought in Flanders, as he himself has
recorded ;

Finally he was stabbed by his friend, the orator
Brutus !

Now, do you know what he did on a certain
occasion in Flanders,

When the rear-guard of his army retreated,
the front giving way too,

And the immortal Twelfth Legion was crowded
so closely together

There was no room for their swords ? Why,
he seized a shield from a soldier,

Put himself straight at the head of his troops
and commanded the captains,

Calling on each by his name, to order forward
the ensigns ;

Then to widen the ranks, and give more room
for their weapons ;

So he won the day, the battle of something-
or-other.

That's what I always say ; if you wish a thing
to be well done,

You must do it yourself, you must not leave it to others ! ”



“ THE HURRYING PEN OF THE STRIPLING. ”

All was silent again ; the Captain continued his reading.

Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying pen of the stripling

Writing epistles important to go next day by the May Flower,

Filled with the name and the fame of the
Puritan maiden Priscilla ;
Every sentence began or closed with the name
of Priscilla,
Till the treacherous pen, to which he confided
the secret,
Strove to betray it by singing and shouting
the name of Priscilla !
Finally closing his book, with a bang of the
ponderous cover,
Sudden and loud as the sound of a soldier
grounding his musket,
Thus to the young man spake Miles Standish
the Captain of Plymouth :
“When you have finished your work, I have
something important to tell you.
Be not however in haste ; I can wait ; I shall
not be impatient !”
Straightway Alden replied, as he folded the
last of his letters,
Pushing his papers aside, and giving respectful
attention :
“Speak ; for whenever you speak, I am always
ready to listen,
Always ready to hear whatever pertains to
Miles Standish.”
Thereupon answered the Captain, embarrassed,
and culling his phrases :
“’Tis not good for a man to be alone, say
the Scriptures.
This I have said before, and again and again
I repeat it ;

Every hour in the day, I think it, and feel it,
and say it.
Since Rose Standish died, my life has been
weary and dreary ;
Sick at heart have I been, beyond the healing
of friendship.
Oft in my lonely hours have I thought of the
maiden Priscilla.
She is alone in the world ; her father and
mother and brother
Died in the winter together ; I saw her going
and coming,
Now to the grave of the dead, and now to the
bed of the dying,
Patient, courageous, and strong, and said to
myself, that if ever
There were angels on earth, as there are angels
in heaven,
Two have I seen and known ; and the angel
whose name is Priscilla
Holds in my desolate life the place which the
other abandoned.
Long have I cherished the thought, but never
have dared to reveal it,
Being a coward in this, though valiant enough
in the most part.
Go to the damsel Priscilla, the loveliest maiden
of Plymouth,
Say that a blunt old Captain, a man not of
words but of actions,
Offers his hand and his heart, the hand and
heart of a soldier.

Not in these words, you know, but this in
short is my meaning ;
I am a maker of war, and not a maker of
phrases.
You, who are bred as a scholar, can say it in
elegant language,
Such as you read in your books of the pleadings
and wooings of lovers,
Such as you think best adapted to win the
heart of a maiden."

When he had spoken, John Alden, the
fair-haired, taciturn stripling,
All aghast at his words, surprised, embarrassed
bewildered,
Trying to mask his dismay by treating the
subject with lightness,
Trying to smile, and yet feeling his heart
stand still in his bosom,
Just as a timepiece stops in a house that is
stricken by lightning,
Thus made answer and spake, or rather
stammered than answered :
"Such a message as that, I am sure I should
mangle and mar it :
If you would have it well done,—I am only
repeating your maxim,—
You must do it yourself, you must not leave it
to others !"
But with the air of a man whom nothing can
turn from his purpose,

.....
Gravely shaking his head, made answer the
Captain of Plymouth :

"Truly the maxim is good, and I do not
mean to gainsay it ;

But we must use it discreetly, and not waste
powder for nothing.

Now, as I said before, I was never a maker of
phrases.

I can march up to a fortress and summon the
place to surrender,

But march up to a woman with such a pro-
posal, I dare not.

I'm not afraid of bullets, nor shot from the
mouth of a cannon,

But of a thundering 'No!' point-blank from
the mouth of a woman,

That I confess I'm afraid of, nor am I ashamed
to confess it !

So you must grant my request, for you are
an elegant scholar,

Having the graces of speech, and skill in the
turning of phrases."

Taking the hand of his friend, who still was
reluctant and doubtful,

Holding it long in his own, and pressing it
kindly, he added :

"Though I have spoken thus lightly, yet deep
is the feeling that prompts me ;

Surely you cannot refuse what I ask in the
name of our friendship !"

Then made answer John Alden : "The name of
friendship is sacred ;

What you demand in that name, I have not
the power to deny you!"

So the strong will prevailed, subduing and
moulding the gentler,

Friendship prevailed over love, and Alden
went on his errand.

III.

The Lover's Errand.



III.

THE LOVER'S ERRAND.

So the strong will prevailed, and Alden went
 on his errand,
 Out of the street of the village, and into the
 paths of the forest,
 Into the tranquil woods, where blue-birds and
 robins were building
 Towns in the populous trees, with hanging
 gardens of verdure,
 Peaceful, aerial cities of joy and affection and
 freedom.
 All around him was calm, but within him com-
 motion and conflict,
 Love contending with friendship, and self
 with each generous impulse.
 To and fro in his breast his thoughts were
 heaving and dashing,
 As in a foundering ship, with every roll of the
 vessel,
 Washes the bitter sea, the merciless surge of
 the ocean !
 "Must I relinquish it all," he cried with a wild
 lamentation,
 "Must I relinquish it all, the joy, the hope,
 the illusion ?

'Was it for this I have loved, and waited, and
worshipped in silence?
Was it for this I have followed the flying feet
and the shadow
Over the wintry sea, to the desolate shores
of New England?
Truly the heart is deceitful, and out of its
depths of corruption
Rise, like an exhalation, the misty phantoms
of passion;
Angels of light they seem, but are only delu-
sions of Satan.
All is clear to me now; I feel it, I see it dis-
tinctly!
This is the hand of the Lord; it is laid upon
me in anger,
For I have followed too much the heart's de-
sires and devices,
Worshipping Astaroth blindly, and impious
idols of Baal.
This is the cross I must bear; the sin and the
swift retribution.'

So through the Plymouth woods John Alden
went on his errand;
Crossing the brook at the ford, where it
brawled over pebble and shadow,
Gathering still, as he went, the May-flowers
blooming around him,
Fragrant, filling the air with a strange and
wonderful sweetness



"JOHN ALDEN WENT ON HIS ERRAND."

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R

L

.....
 Children lost in the woods, and covered with
 leaves in their slumber.
 "Puritan flowers," he said, "and the type of
 Puritan maidens,
 Modest and simple and sweet, the very type
 of Priscilla !
 So I will take them to her ; to Priscilla the
 May-flower of Plymouth,
 Modest and simple and sweet, as a parting
 gift will I take them ;
 Breathing their silent farewells, as they fade
 and wither and perish,
 Soon to be thrown away as is the heart of the
 giver."
 So through the Plymouth woods John Alden
 went on his errand ;
 Came to an open space, and saw the disk of
 the ocean,
 Sail-less, sombre, and cold with the comfort-
 less breath of the east-wind ;
 Saw the new-built house, and people at work
 in a meadow ;
 Heard, as he drew near the door, the musical
 voice of Priscilla
 Singing the hundredth Psalm, the grand old
 Puritan anthem,
 Music that Luther sang to the sacred words of
 the Psalmist,
 Full of the breath of the Lord, consoling and
 comforting many.
 Then, as he opened the door, he beheld the
 form of the maiden

Seated beside her wheel, and the carded wool
like a snow-drift
Piled at her knee, her white hands feeding the
ravenous spindle,
While with her foot on the treadle she guided
the wheel in its motion.
Open wide on her lap lay the well-worn psalm
book of Ainsworth,
Printed in Amsterdam, the words and the
music together,
Rough-hewn, angular notes, like stones in the
wall of a churchyard,
Darkened and overhung by the running vine
of the verses.
Such was the book from whose pages she sang
the old Puritan anthem,
She, the Puritan girl, in the solitude of the
forest,
Making the humble house and the modest ap-
parel of homespun
Beautiful with her beauty, and rich with the
wealth of her being !
Over him rushed, like a wind that is keen and
cold and relentless,
Thoughts of what might have been, and the
weight and woe of his errand ;
All the dreams that had faded, and all the
hopes that had vanished,
All his life henceforth a dreary and tenantless
mansion,
Haunted by vain regrets, and pallid, sorrow-
ful faces.



"ON HER LAP LAY THE WELL-WORN PSALM BOOK."

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R L

Still he said to himself, and almost fiercely he said it,

"Let not him that putteth his hand to the plough look backwards ;

Though the ploughshare cut through the flowers of life to its fountains,

Though it pass o'er the graves of the dead and the hearths of the living,

It is the will of the Lord ; and his mercy endureth for ever !"

So he entered the house : and the hum of the wheel and the singing

Suddenly ceased ; for Priscilla, aroused by his step on the threshold,

Rose as he entered, and gave him her hand, in signal of welcome,

Saying, "I knew it was you, when I heard your step in the passage ;

For I was thinking of you, as I sat there singing and spinning."

Awkward and dumb with delight, that a thought of him had been mingled

Thus in the sacred psalm, that came from the heart of the maiden,

Silent before her he stood, and gave her the flowers for an answer,

Finding no words for his thought. He remembered that day in the winter,

After the first great snow, when he broke a path from the village,

Reeling and plunging along through the drifts
that encumbered the doorway,
Stamping the snow from his feet as he entered
the house, and Priscilla
Laughed at his snowy locks, and gave him a
seat by the fire-side,
Grateful and pleased to know he had thought
of her in the snow-storm.
Had he but spoken then! perhaps not in vain
had he spoken ;
Now it was all too late ; the golden moment
had vanished !
So he stood there abashed, and gave her the
flowers for an answer.

Then they sat down and talked of the birds
and the beautiful Spring-time,
Talked of their friends at home, and the May
Flower that sailed on the morrow.
“ I have been thinking all day,” said gently
the Puritan maiden,
“ Dreaming all night, and thinking all day, of
the hedge-rows of England,—
They are in blossom now, and the country is
all like a garden ;
Thinking of lanes and fields, and the song of
the lark and the linnet,
Seeing the village street, and familiar faces of
neighbours
Going about as of old, and stopping to gossip
together,



"BY THE FIRESIDE."

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ASTOR, LENOX AND
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R

L

And, at the end of the street, the village church,
 with the ivy
 Climbing the old grey tower, and the quiet
 graves in the churchyard.
 Kind are the people I live with, and dear to
 me, my religion ;
 Still my heart is so sad, that I wish myself
 back in Old England.
 You will say it is wrong, but I cannot help it :
 I almost
 Wish myself back in Old England, I feel so
 lonely and wretched."

Thereupon answered the youth :—" Indeed
 I do not condemn you ,
 Stouter hearts than a woman's have quailed in
 this terrible winter.
 Yours is tender and trusting, and needs a
 stronger to lean on ;
 So I have come to you now, with an offer and
 proffer of marriage
 Made by a good man and true, Miles Standish
 the Captain of Plymouth !"

Thus he delivered his message, the dextrous
 writer of letters,—
 Did not embellish the theme, nor array it in
 beautiful phrases,
 But came straight to the point, and blurted it
 out like a school-boy ;
 Even the Captain himself could hardly have
 said it more bluntly.

Mute with amazement and sorrow, Priscilla
the Puritan maiden
Looked into Alden's face, her eyes dilated
with wonder,
Feeling his words like a blow, that stunned
her and rendered her speechless ;
Till at length she exclaimed, interrupting the
ominous silence :
" If the great Captain of Plymouth is so very
eager to wed me,
Why does he not come himself, and take the
trouble to woo me ?
If I am not worth the wooing, I surely am not
worth the winning ! "
Then John Alden began explaining and smooth-
ing the matter,
Making it worse as he went, by saying the
Captain was busy,—
Had no time for such things ;—such things !
the words grating harshly
Fell on the ear of Priscilla ; and swift as a
flash she made answer :
" Has he no time for such things, as you call it,
before he is married,
Would he be likely to find it, or make it, after
the wedding ?
That is the way with you men ; you don't
understand us, you cannot.
When you have made up your minds, after
thinking of this one and that one,
Choosing, selecting, rejecting, comparing one
with another,

.....
Then you make known your desire, with
 abrupt and sudden avowal,
And are offended and hurt, and indignant per-
 haps, that a woman
Does not respond at once to a love that she
 never suspected,
Does not attain at a bound the height to which
 you have been climbing.
This is not right nor just : for surely a woman's
 affection
Is not a thing to be asked for, and had for only
 the asking.
When one is truly in love, one not only says it,
 but shows it.
Had he but waited awhile, had he only showed
 that he loved me,
Even this Captain of yours—who knows?—
 at last might have won me,
Old and rough as he is ; but now it never can
 happen."

Still John Alden went on, unheeding the
 words of Priscilla,
Urging the suit of his friend, explaining, per-
 suading, expanding ;
Spoke of his courage and skill, and of all his
 battles in Flanders,
How with the people of God he had chosen to
 suffer affliction,
How, in return for his zeal, they had made him
 Captain of Plymouth;

He was a gentleman born, could trace his pedigree plainly

Back to Hugh Standish of Duxbury Hall, in Lancashire, England,

Who was the son of Ralph, and the grandson of Thurston de Standish;

Heir unto vast estates, of which he was basely defrauded,

Still bore the family arms, and had for his crest a cock argent

Combed and wattled gules, and all the rest of the blazon.

He was a man of honour, of noble and generous nature ;

Though he was rough, he was kindly ; she knew how during the winter

He had attended the sick, with a hand as gentle as woman's ;

Somewhat hasty and hot, he could not deny it, and headstrong,

Stern as a soldier might be, but hearty, and placable always,

Not to be laughed at and scorned, because he was little of stature ;

For he was great of heart, magnanimous, courtly, courageous ;

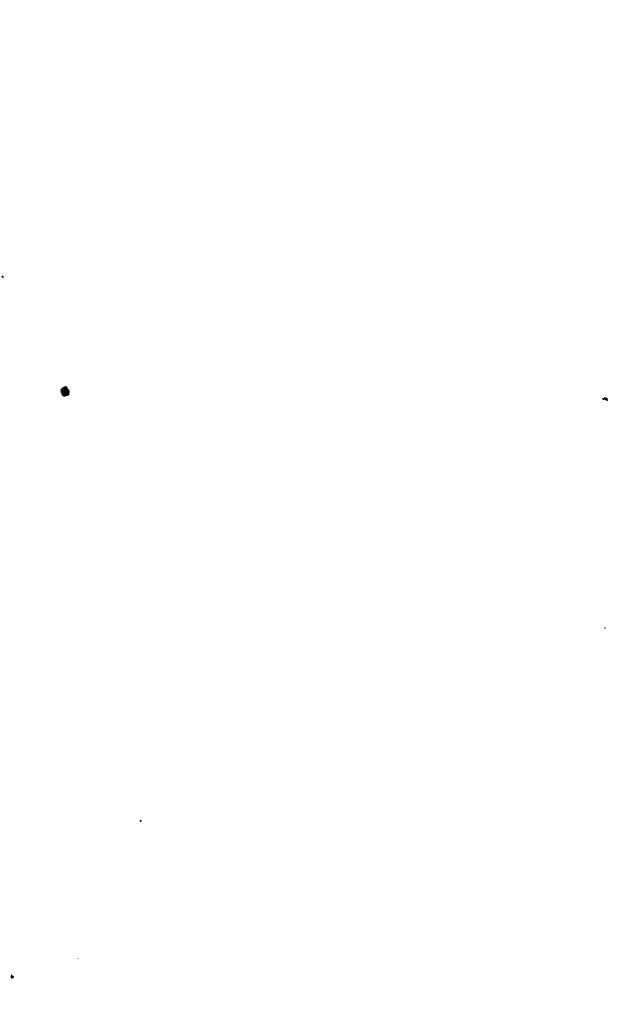
Any woman in Plymouth, nay, any woman in England,

Might be happy and proud to be called the wife of Miles Standish !

But as he warmed and glowed, in his simple
and eloquent language,
Quite forgetful of self, and full of the praise of
his rival,
Archly the maiden smiled, and, with eyes over-
running with laughter,
Said, in a tremulous voice, "Why don't you
speak for yourself, John?"

IV.

John Alden.



IV.

JOHN ALDEN.

INTO the open air John Alden, perplexed and
bewildered,
Rushed like a man insane, and wandered alone
by the seaside;
Paced up and down the sands, and bared his
head to the east-wind,
Cooling his heated brow, and the fire and fever
within him.
Slowly as out of the heavens, with apocalypti-
cal splendours,
Sank the City of God, in the vision of John
the Apostle,
So, with its cloudy walls of chrysolite, jasper,
and sapphire,
Sank the broad red sun, and over its turrets
uplifted
'Glimmered the golden reed of the angel who
measured the city.

"Welcome, O wind of the East!" he ex-
claimed in his wild exultation,
"Welcome, O wind of the East, from the caves
of the misty Atlantic!
Blowing o'er fields of dulse, and measureless
meadows of sea-grass,

Blowing o'er rocky wastes, and the grottoes
and gardens of ocean !

Lay thy cold, moist hand on my burning fore-
head, and wrap me

Close in thy garments of mist, to allay the
fever within me ! ”

Like an awakened conscience, the sea was
moaning and tossing

Beating remorseful and loud the mutable sands
of the seashore.

Fierce in his soul was the struggle and tumult
of passions contending ;

Love triumphant and crowned, and friendship
wounded and bleeding,

Passionate cries of desire, and importunate
pleadings of duty !

“ Is it my fault,” he said, “ that the maiden
has chosen between us ?

Is it my fault that he failed,—my fault that I
am the victor ? ”

Then within him there thundered a voice, like
the voice of the Prophet:

“ It hath displeased the Lord ! ”—and he
thought of David's transgression,

Bathsheba's beautiful face, and his friend in
the front of the battle !

Shame and confusion of guilt, and abasement
and self-condemnation,

Overwhelmed him at once ; and he cried in the
deepest contrition :

“ It hath displeased the Lord ! It is the temp-
tation of Satan ! ”



"JOHN ALDEN WANDERED ALONE BY THE SEASIDE."

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R

Then, uplifting his head, he looked at the
sea, and beheld there
Dimly the shadowy form of the May Flower
riding at anchor,
Rocked on the rising tide, and ready to sail on
the morrow ;
Heard the voices of men through the mist, the
rattle of cordage
Thrown on the deck, the shouts of the mate,
and the sailors' " Ay, ay, Sir ! "
Clear and distinct, but not loud, in the drip-
ping air of the twilight.
Still for a moment he stood, and listened, and
stared at the vessel,
Then went hurriedly on, as one who, seeing a
phantom,
Stops, then quickens his pace, and follows the
beckoning shadow.
" Yes, it is plain to me now," he murmured ;
" the hand of the Lord is
Leading me out of the land of darkness, the
bondage of error,
Through the sea, that shall lift the walls of its
waters around me,
Hiding me, cutting me off, from the cruel
thoughts that pursue me.
Back will I go o'er the ocean, this dreary land
will abandon,
Her whom I may not love, and him whom my
heart has offended.
Better to be in my grave in the green old
churchyard in England,

Close by my mother's side, and among the dust
of my kindred ;
Better be dead and forgotten, than living in
shame and dishonour !
Sacred and safe and unseen, in the dark of the
narrow chamber
With me my secret shall lie, like a buried jewel
that glimmers
Bright on the hand that is dust, in the cham-
bers of silence and darkness,—
Yes, as the marriage ring of the great espousal
hereafter !”

Thus as he spake, he turned, in the strength
of his strong resolution,
Leaving behind him the shore, and hurried
along in the twilight,
Through the congenial gloom of the forest
silent and sombre,
Till he beheld the lights in the seven houses of
Plymouth,
Shining like seven stars in the dusk and mist
of the evening.
Soon he entered his door, and found the re-
doubtable Captain
Sitting alone, and absorbed in the martial
pages of Cæsar,
Fighting some great campaign in Hainault or
Brabant or Flanders.
“ Long have you been on your errand,” he
said with a cheery demeanour,

Even as one who is waiting an answer, and
fears not the issue.

"Not far off is the house, although the woods
are between us ;

But you have lingered so long, that while you
were going and coming

I have fought ten battles and sacked and de-
molished a city.

Come, sit down, and in order relate to me all
that has happened."

Then John Alden spake, and related the
wondrous adventure,

From beginning to end, minutely, just as it
happened ;

How he had seen Priscilla, and how he had
sped in his courtship,

Only smoothing a little, and softening down
her refusal.

But when he came at length to the words
Priscilla had spoken,

Words so tender and cruel : " Why don't you
speak for yourself, John ? "

Up leaped the Captain of Plymouth, and
stamped on the floor, till his armour .

Clanged on the wall, where it hung, with a
sound of sinister omen.

All his pent-up wrath burst forth in a sudden
explosion,

Even as a hand-grenade, that scatters destruc-
tion around it.

Wildly he shouted, and loud: "John Alden!
you have betrayed me!

Me, Miles Standish, your friend! have sup-
planted, defrauded, betrayed me!

One of my ancestors ran his sword through
the heart of Wat Tyler;

Who shall prevent me from running my own
through the heart of a traitor?

Yours is the greater treason, for yours is a
treason to friendship!

You, who lived under my roof, whom I cher-
ished and loved as a brother;

You, who have fed at my board, and drunk at
my cup, to whose keeping

I have intrusted my honour, my thoughts the
most sacred and secret,—

You too, Brutus! ah woe to the name of
friendship hereafter!

Brutus was Cæsar's friend, and you were mine,
but henceforward

Let there be nothing between us save war, and
implacable hatred!"

So spake the Captain of Plymouth, and
strode about in the chamber,

Chafing and choking with rage; like cords
were the veins on his temples.

But in the midst of his anger a man appeared
at the doorway,

Bringing in uttermost haste a message of
urgent importance,

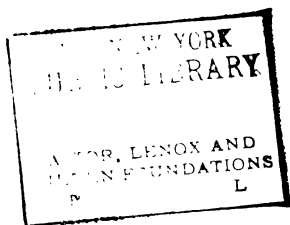
.....
 Rumours of danger and war and hostile incur-
 sions of Indians !
 Straightway the Captain paused, and, without
 further question or parley,
 Took from the nail on the wall his sword, with
 its scabbard of iron,
 Buckled the belt round his waist, and, frown-
 ing fiercely, departed.
 Alden was left alone. He heard the clank of
 the scabbard
 Growing fainter and fainter, and dying away
 in the distance.
 Then he arose from his seat, and looked forth
 into the darkness,
 Felt the cool air blow on his cheek, that was
 hot with the insult,
 Lifted his eyes to the heavens, and, folding
 his hands as in childhood,
 Prayed in the silence of night to the Father
 who seeth in secret.

Meanwhile the choleric Captain strode
 wrathful away to the council,
 Found it already assembled, impatiently wait-
 ing his coming ;
 Men in the middle of life, austere and grave in
 deportment,
 Only one of them old, the hill that was nearest
 to heaven,
 Covered with snow, but erect, the excellent
 Elder of Plymouth.

God had sifted three kingdoms to find the
wheat for this planting,
Then had sifted the wheat, as the living seed
of a nation ;
So say the chronicles old, and such is the faith
of the people !
Near them was standing an Indian, in attitude
stern and defiant,
Naked down to the waist, and grim and ferocious
in aspect ;
While on the table before them was lying un-
opened a Bible,
Ponderous, bound in leather, brass-studded,
printed in Holland,
And beside it outstretched the skin of a rattle-
snake glittered,
Filled, like a quiver, with arrows ; a signal and
challenge of warfare,
Brought by the Indian, and speaking with
arrowy tongues of defiance.
This Miles Standish beheld, as he entered, and
heard them debating
What were an answer befitting the hostile
message and menace,
Talking of this and of that, contriving, sug-
gesting, objecting ;
One voice only for peace, and that the voice
of the Elder,
Judging it wise and well that some at least
were converted,
Rather than any were slain, for this was but
Christian behavior !



"NEAR THEM WAS STANDING AN INDIAN."



Then outspake Miles Standish, the stalwart
 Captain of Plymouth,
 Muttering deep in his throat, for his voice was
 husky with anger,
 "What ! do you mean to make war with milk
 and the water of roses ?
 Is it to shoot red squirrels you have your how-
 itzer planted
 There on the roof of the church, or is it to
 shoot red devils ?
 Truly the only tongue that is understood by a
 savage
 Must be the tongue of fire that speaks from
 the mouth of the cannon !"
 Thereupon answered and said the excellent
 Elder of Plymouth,
 Somewhat amazed and alarmed at this irreve-
 rent language :
 " Not so thought Saint Paul, nor yet the other
 Apostles ;
 Not from the cannon's mouth were the tongues
 of fire they spake with ! "
 But unheeded fell this mild rebuke on the
 Captain,
 Who had advanced to the table, and thus con-
 tinued discoursing :
 " Leave this matter to me, for to me by right
 it pertaineth.
 War is a terrible trade ; but in the cause that is
 righteous,
 Sweet is the smell of powder ; and thus I
 answer the challenge ! "

Then from the rattlesnake's skin, with a sudden, contemptuous gesture,
Jerking the Indian arrows, he filled it with powder and bullets
Full to the very jaws, and handed it back to the savage,
Saying, in thundering tones: "Here, take it!
this is your answer!"
Silently out of the room then glided the glistening savage,
Bearing the serpent's skin, and seeming himself like a serpent,
Winding his sinuous way in the dark to the depths of the forest.

V.

The Sailing of the May
Flower.

V.

THE SAILING OF THE MAY FLOWER.

JUST in the grey of the dawn, as the mists up-
 rose from the meadows,
 There was a stir and a sound in the slumbering
 village of Plymouth ;
 Clanging and clicking of arms, and the order
 imperative, " Forward !"
 Given in tone suppressed, a tramp of feet, and
 then silence.
 Figures ten, in the mist, marched slowly out of
 the village.
 Standish the stalwart it was, with eight of his
 valorous army,
 Led by their Indian guide, by Hobomok, friend
 of the white men,
 Northward marching to quell the sudden re-
 volt of the savage.
 Giants they seemed in the mist, or the mighty
 men of King David
 Giants in heart they were, who believed in
 God and the Bible,—
 Ay, who believed in the smiting of Midianites
 and Philistines.
 Over them gleamed far off the crimson banners
 of morning ;

Under them loud on the sands, the serried billows, advancing,
Fired along the line, and in regular order retreated.

Many a mile had they marched, when at length the village of Plymouth
Woke from its sleep, and arose, intent on its manifold labours.
Sweet was the air and soft ; and slowly the smoke from the chimneys
Rose over roofs of thatch, and pointed steadily eastward ;
Men came forth from the doors, and paused and talked of the weather,
Said that the wind had changed, and was blowing fair for the May Flower ;
Talked of their Captain's departure, and all the dangers that menaced,
He being gone, the town, and what should be done in his absence.
Merrily sang the birds, and the tender voices of women
Consecrated with hymns the common cares of the household.
Out of the sea rose the sun, and the billows rejoiced at his coming ;
Beautiful were his feet on the purple tops of the mountains ;
Beautiful on the sails of the May Flower riding at anchor,

.....
Battered and blackened and worn by all the
storms of the winter.

Loosely against her masts was hanging and
flapping her canvas,

Rent by so many gales, and patched by the
hands of the sailors.

Suddenly from her side, as the sun rose over
the ocean,

Darted a puff of smoke, and floated seaward ;
anon rang

Loud over field and forest the cannon's roar,
and the echoes

Heard and repeated the sound, the signal-gun
of departure !

Ah ! but with louder echoes replied the hearts
of the people !

Meekly, in voices subdued, the chapter was
read from the Bible,

Meekly the prayer was begun, but ended in
fervent entreaty !

Then from their houses in haste came forth
the Pilgrims of Plymouth,

Men and women and children, all hurrying
down to the seashore,

Eager, with tearful eyes, to say farewell to
the May Flower,

Homeward bound o'er the sea, and leaving
them here in the desert.

Foremost among them was Alden. All night
he had lain without slumber,

Turning and tossing about in the heat and
unrest of his fever.
He had beheld Miles Standish, who came back
late from the council,
Stalking into the room, and heard him mutter
and murmur,
Sometimes it seemed a prayer, and sometimes
it sounded like swearing.
Once he had come to the bed, and stood there
a moment in silence ;
Then he had turned away, and said : " I will
not awake him ;
Let him sleep on, it is best ; for what is the use
of more talking ! "
Then he extinguished the light, and threw
himself down on his pallet,
Dressed as he was, and ready to start at the
break of the morning,—
Covered himself with the cloak he had worn
in his campaigns in Flanders,—
Slept as a soldier sleeps in his bivouac, ready
for action.
But with the dawn he arose ; in the twilight
Alden beheld him
Put on his corslet of steel, and all the rest of
his armour,
Buckle about his waist his trusty blade of
Damascus,
Take from the corner his musket, and so stride
out of the chamber.
Often the heart of the youth had burned and
yearned to embrace him,

Often his lips had essayed to speak, imploring
for pardon ;
All the old friendship came back, with its
tender and grateful emotions ;
But his pride overmastered the nobler nature
within him,—
Pride, and the sense of his wrong, and the
burning fire of the insult,
So he beheld his friend departing in anger,
but spake not,
Saw him go forth to danger, perhaps to
death, and he spake not !
Then he arose from his bed, and heard what
the people were saying,
Joined in the talk at the door, with Stephen
and Richard and Gilbert,
Joined in the morning prayer, and in the
reading of Scripture,
And, with the others, in haste went hurrying
down to the sea-shore,
Down to the Plymouth Rock, that had been to
their feet as a door-step
Into a world unknown,—the corner-stone of a
nation !

There with his boat was the Master, already
a little impatient
Lest he should lose the tide, or the wind might
shift to the eastward,
Square-built, hearty, and strong, with an odour
of ocean about him,

Speaking with this one and that, and cram-
ming letters and parcels
Into his pockets capacious, and messages
mingled together
Into his narrow brain, till at last he was wholly
bewildered.

Nearer the boat stood Alden, with one foot
placed on the gun-wale,
One still firm on the rock, and talking at times
with the sailors,
Seated erect on the thwarts, all ready and
eager for starting.

He too was eager to go, and thus put an end to
his anguish,

Thinking to fly from despair, that swifter than
keel is or canvas,

Thinking to drown in the sea the ghost that
would rise and pursue him.

But as he gazed on the crowd, he beheld the
form of Priscilla

Standing dejected among them, unconscious
of all that was passing.

Fixed were her eyes upon his, as if she divined
his intention,

Fixed with a look so sad, so reproachful, im-
ploring, and patient,

That with a sudden revulsion his heart recoiled
from its purpose,

As from the verge of a crag, where one step
more is destruction.

Strange is the heart of man, with its quick,
mysterious instincts !



**"ARE YOU SO MUCH OFFENDED, YOU WILL NOT
SPEAK TO ME?"**

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R

L

.....
 Strange is the life of man, and fatal or fated
 are moments,

Whereupon turn, as on hinges, the gates of the
 wall adamantine !

"Here I remain !" he exclaimed, as he looked
 at the heavens above him,

Thanking the Lord whose breath had scat-
 tered the mist and the madness,

Wherein, blind and lost, to death he was
 staggering headlong.

"Yonder snow-white cloud, that floats in the
 ether above me,

Seems like a hand that is pointing and beckon-
 ing over the ocean.

There is another hand, that is not so spectral
 and ghost-like,

Holding me, drawing me back, and clasping
 mine for protection.

Float, O hand of cloud, and vanish away in
 the ether !

Roll thyself up like a fist, to threaten and
 daunt me ; I heed not

Either your warning or menace, or any omen
 of evil !

There is no land so sacred, no air so pure and
 so wholesome,

As is the air she breathes, and the soil that is
 pressed by her footsteps.

Here for her sake will I stay, and like an in-
 visible presence

Hover around her for ever, protecting,
 supporting her weakness ;

Yes! as my foot was the first that stepped on
this rock at the landing,
So, with the blessing of God, shall it be the
last at the leaving!"

Meanwhile the Master alert, but with digni-
fied air and important,
Scanning with watchful eye the tide and the
wind and the weather,
Walked about on the sands ; and the people
crowded around him
Saying a few last words, and enforcing his
careful remembrance.
Then, taking each by the hand, as if he were
grasping a tiller,
Into the boat he sprang, and in haste shoved
off to his vessel,
Glad in his heart to get rid of all this worry
and flurry,
Glad to 'be gone from a land of sand and
sickness and sorrow,
Short allowance of victual, and plenty of
nothing but Gospel !
Lost in the sound of the oars was the last fare-
well of the Pilgrims.
O strong hearts and true ! not one went back in
the May Flower !
No, not one looked back, who had set his
hand to this ploughing !

Soon were heard on board the shouts and
 songs of the sailors
 Heaving the windlass round, and hoisting the
 ponderous anchor.
 Then the yards were braced, and all sails set
 to the west-wind,
 Blowing steady and strong; and the May
 Flower sailed from the harbour,
 Rounded the point of the Gurnet, and leaving
 far to the southward
 Island and cape of sand, and the Field of the
 First Encounter,
 Took the wind on her quarter, and stood for
 the open Atlantic,
 Borne on the send of the sea, and the swelling
 hearts of the Pilgrims.

Long in silence they watched the receding
 sail of the vessel,
 Much endeared to them all, as something liv-
 ing and human;
 Then, as if filled with the spirit, and wrapt in a
 vision prophetic,
 Baring his hoary head, the excellent Elder of
 Plymouth
 Said, "Let us pray!" and they prayed, and
 thanked the Lord and took courage.
 Mournfully sobbed the waves at the base of
 the rock, and above them
 Bowed and whispered the wheat on the hill of
 death, and their kindred

Seemed to awake in their graves, and to join
in the prayer that they uttered.
Sun-illumined and white, on the eastern verge
of the ocean
Gleamed the departing sail, like a marble slab
in a graveyard ;
Buried beneath it lay for ever all hope of
escaping.
Lo ! as they turned to depart, they saw the
form of an Indian,
Watching them from the hill ; but while they
spake with each other,
Pointing with outstretched hands, and saying,
“ Look ! ” he had vanished.
So they returned to their homes ; but Alden
lingered a little,
Musing alone on the shore, and watching the
wash of the billows
Round the base of the rock, and the sparkle
and flash of the sunshine,
Like the spirit of God, moving visibly over
the waters.

VI.

Priscilla.



VI.

PRISCILLA.

THUS for a while he stood, and mused by the
 shore of the ocean,
 Thinking of many things, and most of all of
 Priscilla ;
 And as if thought had the power to draw to
 itself, like the loadstone,
 Whatsoever it touches, by subtle laws of its
 nature,
 Lo! as he turned to depart, Priscilla was
 standing beside him.

“ Are you so much offended, you will not
 speak to me ? ” said she.
 “ Am I so much to blame, that yesterday when
 you were pleading
 Warmly the cause of another, my heart, impul-
 sive and wayward,
 Pleaded your own, and spake out, forgetful
 perhaps of decorum ?
 Certainly you can forgive me for speaking so
 frankly, for saying
 What I ought not to have said, yet now I can
 never unsay it ;
 For there are moments in life, when the heart
 is so full of emotion,

That if by chance it be shaken, or into its
depths like a pebble

Drops some careless word, it overflows, and
its secret,

Spilt on the ground like water, can never be
gathered together.

Yesterday I was shocked, when I heard you
speak of Miles Standish,

Praising his virtues, transforming his very de-
fects into virtues,

Praising his courage and strength, and even
his fighting in Flanders,

As if by fighting alone you could win the
heart of a woman,

Quite overlooking yourself and the rest, in
exalting your hero.

Therefore I spake as I did, by an irresistible
impulse.

You will forgive me, I hope, for the sake of
the friendship between us,

Which is too true and too sacred to be so easily
broken !”

Thereupon answered John Alden, the scholar,
the friend of Miles Standish :

“I was not angry with you, with myself alone
I was angry,

Seeing how badly I managed the matter I had
in my keeping.”

“No ;” interrupted the maiden, with answer
prompt and decisive ;

“No ; you were angry with me, for speaking
so frankly and freely.



"FIXED WERE HER EYES UPON HIS."

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R

L

It was wrong, I acknowledge ; for it is the fate
of a woman

Long to be patient and silent, to wait like a
ghost that is speechless,

Till some questioning voice dissolves the spell
of its silence.

Hence is the inner life of so many suffering
women

Sunless and silent and deep, like subterranean
rivers

Running through caverns of darkness, un-
heard, unseen, and unfruitful,

Chafing their channels of stone, with endless
and profitless murmurs."

Thereupon answered John Alden, the young
man, the lover of women :

"Heaven forbid it, Priscilla ; and truly they
seem to me always

More like the beautiful rivers that watered the
garden of Eden,

More like the river Euphrates, through deserts
of Havilah flowing,

Filling the land with delight, and memories
sweet of the garden !"

"Ah, by these words, I can see," again inter-
rupted the maiden.

"How very little you prize me, or care for
what I am saying.

When from the depths of my heart, in pain and
with secret misgiving,

Frankly I speak to you, asking for sympathy
only and kindness,

Straightway you take up my words, that are
plain and direct and in earnest,
Turn them away from their meaning, and answer
with flattering phrases.
This is not right, is not just, is not true to the
best that is in you ;
For I know and esteem you, and feel that your
nature is noble,
Lifting mine up to a higher, a more ethereal
level.
Therefore I value your friendship, and feel it
perhaps the more keenly
If you say aught that implies I am only as one
among many,
If you make use of those common and complimentary
phrases
Most men think so fine, in dealing and speaking
with women,
But which women reject as insipid, if not as
insulting."

Mute and amazed was Alden ; and listened
and looked at Priscilla,
Thinking he never had seen her more fair,
more divine in her beauty,
He who but yesterday pleaded so glibly the
cause of another,
Stood there embarrassed and silent, and seeking
in vain for an answer.
So the maiden went on, and little divined or
imagined

What was at work in his heart, that made him
so awkward and speechless.

“Let us, then, be what we are, and speak
what we think, and in all things

Keep ourselves loyal to truth, and the sacred
professions of friendship.

It is no secret I tell you, nor am I ashamed to
declare it :

I have liked to be with you, to see you, to
speak with you always.

So I was hurt at your words, and a little
affronted to hear you

Urge me to marry your friend, though he were
the Captain Miles Standish.

For I must tell you the truth : much more to
me is your friendship

Than all the love he could give, were he twice
the hero you think him.”

Then she extended her hand, and Alden, who
eagerly grasped it,

Felt all the wounds in his heart, that were
aching and bleeding so sorely,

Healed by the touch of that hand, and he said
with a voice full of feeling :

“Yes, we must ever be friends; and of all who
offer you friendship

Let me be ever the first, the truest, the near-
est and dearest !”

Casting a farewell look at the glimmering
sail of the May Flower,

Distant, but still in sight, and sinking below
the horizon,

Homeward together they walked, with a
strange, indefinite feeling,

That all the rest had departed and left them
alone in the desert.

But, as they went through the fields in the
blessing and smile of the sunshine.

Lighter grew their hearts, and Priscilla said
very archly :

“ Now that our terrible Captain has gone in
pursuit of the Indians,

Where he is happier far than he would be com-
manding a household,

You may speak boldly, and tell me of all that
happened between you,

When you returned last night, and said how
ungrateful you found me.”

Thereupon answered John Alden, and told her
the whole of the story,—

Told her his own despair, and the direful
wrath of Miles Standish.

Whereat the maiden smiled, and said between
laughing and earnest,

“ He is a little chimney, and heated hot in a
moment ! ”

But as he gently rebuked her, and told her how
much he had suffered,—

How he had even determined to sail that day
in the May Flower,

And had remained for her sake, on hearing the
dangers that threatened,—

All her manner was changed, and she said
with a faltering accent,

"Truly I thank you for this : how good you
have been to me always !"

Thus as a pilgrim devout, who toward
Jerusalem journeys,
Taking three steps in advance, and one reluctantly
backward,
Urged by importunate zeal, and withheld by
pangs of contrition ;
Slowly but steadily onward, receding yet ever
advancing,
Journeyed this Puritan youth to the holy land
of his longings,
Urged by the fervour of love, and withheld by
remorseful misgivings.



VII.

The March of Miles
Standish.

VII.

THE MARCH OF MILES STANDISH.

MEANWHILE the stalwart Miles Standish
 was marching steadily northward,
 Winding through forest and swamp, and along
 the trend of the seashore,
 All day long, with hardly a halt, the fire of his
 anger
 Burning and crackling within, and the sulphur-
 ous odour of powder
 Seeming more sweet to his nostrils than all
 the scents of the forest.
 Silent and moody he went, and much he re-
 volved his discomfort ;
 He who was used to success, and to easy
 victories always,
 Thus to be flouted, rejected, and laughed to
 scorn by a maiden,
 Thus to be mocked and betrayed by the friend
 whom most he had trusted !
 Ah ! 'twas too much to be borne, and he
 fretted and chafed in his armour !

“ I alone am to blame,” he muttered, “ for
 mine was the folly.
 What has a rough old soldier, grown grim and
 grey in the harness,

Used to the camp and its ways, to do with the
wooing of maidens ?

"Twas but a dream,—let it pass,—let it vanish
like so many others !

What I thought was a flower, is only a weed,
and is worthless ;

Out of my heart will I pluck it, and throw it
away, and henceforward

Be but a fighter of battles, a lover and wooer
of dangers ! "

Thus he revolved in his mind his sorry defeat
and discomfort,

While he was marching by day or lying at
night in the forest,

Looking up at the trees, and the constellations
beyond them.

After a three days' march he came to an
Indian encampment

Pitched on the edge of a meadow, between the
sea and the forest ;

Women at work by the tents, and the warriors,
horrid with war-paint,

Seated about a fire, and smoking and talking
together ;

Who, when they saw from afar the sudden
approach of the white men,

Saw the flash of the sun on breastplate and
sabre and musket,

Straightway leaped to their feet, and two, from
among them advancing,

Came to parley with Standish, and offer him
 furs as a present ;
 Friendship was in their looks, but in their
 hearts there was hatred.
 Braves of the tribe were these, and brothers
 gigantic in stature,
 Huge as Goliath of Gath, or the terrible Og,
 king of Bashan ;
 One was Pecksuot named, and the other was
 called Wattawamat.
 Round their necks were suspended their knives
 in scabbards of wampum,
 Two-edged, trenchant knives, with points as
 sharp as a needle.
 Other arms had they none, for they were
 cunning and crafty.
 " Welcome, English ! " they said,—these words
 they had learned from the traders
 Touching at times on the coast, to barter and
 chaffer for peltries.
 Then in their native tongue they began to
 parley with Standish,
 Through his guide and interpreter, Hobomok,
 friend of the white man,
 Begging for blankets and knives, but mostly
 for muskets and powder,
 Kept by the white man, they said, concealed,
 with the plague, in his cellars,
 Ready to be let loose, and destroy his brother
 the red man !
 But when Standish refused, and said he would
 give them the Bible,

Suddenly changing their tone, they began to
boast and to bluster.

Then Wattawamat advanced with a stride in
front of the other,

And, with a lofty demeanour, thus vauntingly
spoke to the Captain :



“ Now Wattawamat can see, by the fiery eyes
of the Captain,

Angry is he in his heart ; but the heart of the
brave Wattawamat

Is not afraid at the sight. He was not born
of a woman,

But on a mountain, at night, from an oaktree
riven by lightning,

Forth he sprang at a bound, with all his weapons about him,
Shouting, ' Who is there here to fight with the brave Wattawamat ? ' "

Then he unsheathed his knife, and, whetting the blade on his left hand,
Held it aloft and displayed a woman's face on the handle,
Saying, with bitter expression and look of sinister meaning :

" I have another at home, with the face of a man on the handle ;
By and by they shall marry ; and there will be plenty of children ! "

Then stood Pecksuot forth, self-vaunting, insulting Miles Standish :

While with his fingers he patted the knife that hung at his bosom,
Drawing it half from its sheath, and plunging it back, as he muttered,
" By and by it shall see ; it shall eat ; ah, ha ! but shall speak not !

This is the mighty Captain the white men have sent to destroy us !
He is a little man ; let him go and work with the women ! "

Meanwhile Standish had noted the faces and figures of Indians
Peeping and creeping about from bush to tree in the forest,

Feigning to look for game, with arrows set on
their bow-strings,
Drawing about him still closer and closer the
net of their ambush.
But undaunted he stood, and dissembled and
treated them smoothly;
So the old chronicles say, that were writ in the
days of the fathers.
But when he heard their defiance, the boast,
the taunt, and the insult,
All the hot blood of his race, of Sir Hugh and
of Thurston de Standish,
Boiled and beat in his heart, and swelled in
the veins of his temples.
Headlong he leaped on the boaster, and, snatch-
ing his knife from its scabbard,
Plunged it into his heart, and, reeling back-
ward, the savage
Fell with his face to the sky, and a fiendlike
fierceness upon it.
Straight there arose from the forest the awful
sound of the warwhoop,
And, like a flurry of snow on the whistling
wind of December,
Swift and sudden and keen came a flight of
feathery arrows.
Then came a cloud of smoke, and out of the
cloud came the lightning,
Out of the lightning thunder ; and death unseen
ran before it.
Frightened the savages fled for shelter in
swamp and in thicket,



"HE FELL WITH BOTH HANDS CLUTCHING THE GREENSWARD."

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Hotly pursued and beset ; but their sachem,
 the brave Wattawamat,
 Fled not ; he was dead. Unswerving and swift
 had a bullet
 Passed through his brain, and he fell with both
 hands clutching the greensward,
 Seeming in death to hold back from his foe
 the land of his fathers.

There on the flowers of the meadow the
 warriors lay, and above them,
 Silent, with folded arms, stood Hobomok, friend
 of the white man.
 Smiling at length he exclaimed to the stalwart
 Captain of Plymouth :
 "Pecksuot bragged very loud of his courage,
 his strength and his stature,—
 Mocked the great Captain, and called him a
 little man ; but I see now
 Big enough have you been to lay him speech-
 less before you !"

Thus the first battle was fought and won by
 the stalwart Miles Standish.
 When the tidings thereof were brought to the
 village of Plymouth,
 And as a trophy of war the head of the brave
 Wattawamat
 Scowled from the roof of the fort, which at
 once was a church and a fortress,
 All who beheld it rejoiced, and praised the
 Lord, and took courage.

Only Priscilla averted her face from this spectre of terror.

Thanking God in her heart that she had not married Miles Standish;

Shrinking, fearing almost, lest, coming home from his battles,

He should lay claim to her hand, as the prize and reward of his valour.



"THE HEAD OF THE BRAVE WATTAWAMAT."

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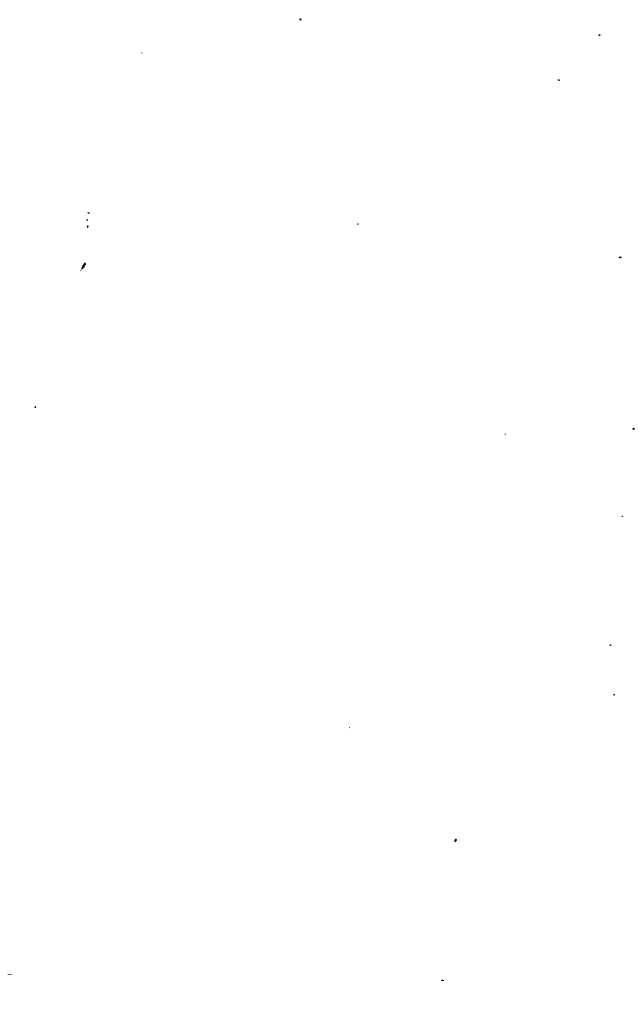
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VIII.

The Spinning-Wheel.

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VIII.

THE SPINNING-WHEEL.

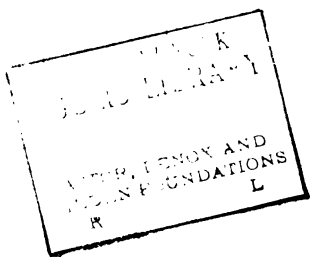
MONTH after month passed away, and in Au-
tumn the ships of the merchants
Came with kindred and friends, with cattle
and corn for the Pilgrims.
All in the village was peace ; the men were in-
tent on their labours,
Busy with hewing and building, with garden-
plot and with merestead,
Busy with breaking the glebe, and mowing the
grass in the meadows,
Searching the sea for its fish, and hunting the
deer in the forest.
All in the village was peace ; but at times the
rumour of warfare
Filled the air with alarm, and the apprehension
of danger.
Bravely the stalwart Miles Standish was scour-
ing the land with his forces,
Waxing valiant in fight and defeating the alien
armies,
Till his name had become a sound of fear to
the nations.
Anger was still in his heart, but at times the
remorse and contrition,

Which in all noble natures succeed the passion-
ate outbreak,
Came like a rising tide, that encounters the
rush of a river,
Staying its current awhile, but making it bitter
and brackish.

Meanwhile Alden at home had built him a
new habitation,
Solid, substantial, of timber rough-hewn from
the firs of the forest.
Wooden-barred was the door, and the roof was
covered with rushes ;
Latticed the windows were, and the window-
panes were of paper,
Oiled to admit the light, while wind and rain
were excluded.
There too he dug a well, and around it planted
an orchard :
Still may be seen to this day some trace of the
well and the orchard.
Close to the house was the stall, where, safe
and secure from annoyance,
Raghorn, the snow-white steer, that had fallen
to Alden's allotment
In the division of cattle, might ruminate in the
night-time
Over the pastures he cropped, made fragrant
by sweet pennyroyal.
Oft when his labour was finished, with eager
feet would the dreamer



"THE SPINNING-WHEEL."



.....
Follow the pathway that ran through the
woods to the house of Priscilla,
Led by illusions romantic and subtle decep-
tions of fancy,
Pleasure disguised as duty, and love in the
semblance of friendship.
Ever of her he thought, when he fashioned the
walls of his dwelling ;
Ever of her he thought, when he delved in the
soil of his garden ;
Ever of her he thought, when he read in his
Bible on Sunday
Praise of the virtuous woman, as she is de-
scribed in the Proverbs,—
How the heart of her husband doth safely trust
in her always,
How all the days of her life she will do him
good, and not evil,
How she seeketh the wool and the flax and
worketh with gladness,
How she layeth her hand to the spindle and
holdeth the distaff,
How she is not afraid of the snow for herself or
her household,
Knowing her household are clothed with the
scarlet cloth of her weaving !

So as she sat at her wheel one afternoon in
the Autumn,
Alden, who opposite sat, and was watching
her dextrous fingers,
As if the thread she were spinning were that
of his life and his fortune,

After a pause in their talk, thus spake to the
 sound of the spindle.
"Truly, Priscilla," he said, "when I see you
 spinning and spinning,
Never idle a moment, but thrifty and thought-
 ful of others,
Suddenly you are transformed, are visibly
 changed in a moment ;
You are no longer Priscilla, but Bertha the
 Beautiful Spinner."
Here the light foot on the treadle grew swifter
 and swifter ; the spindle
Uttered an angry snarl, and the thread snapped
 short in her fingers ;
While the impetuous speaker, not heeding the
 mischief, continued :
"You are the beautiful Bertha, the spinner,
 the queen of Helvetia ;
She whose story I read at a stall in the streets
 of Southampton,
Who, as she rode on her palfrey, o'er valley
 and meadow and mountain,
Ever was spinning her thread from a distaff
 fixed to her saddle.
She was so thrifty and good, that her name
 passed into a proverb.
So shall it be with your own, when the spin-
 ning-wheel shall no longer
Hum in the house of the farmer, and fill its
 chambers with music.
Then shall the mothers, reproving, relate how
 it was in their childhood,



"HOLD THIS SKEIN ON YOUR HANDS."

THE NATIONAL
PUBLIC HEALTH

ANTHROPOLOGY
FILE NO. 10000

Praising the good old times, and the days of
Priscilla the spinner !”
Straight uprose from her wheel the beautiful
Puritan maiden,
Pleased with the praise of her thrift from him
whose praise was the sweetest,
Drew from the reel on the table a snowy skein
of her spinning,
Thus making answer, meanwhile, to the flattering
phrases of Alden :
“Come, you must not be idle ; if I am a
pattern for housewives,
Show yourself equally worthy of being the
model of husbands.
Hold this skein on your hands, while I wind it,
ready for knitting ;
Then who knows but hereafter, when fashions
have changed and the manners,
Fathers may talk to their sons of the good old
times of John Alden !”
Thus, with a jest and a laugh, the skein on his
hands she adjusted,
He sitting awkwardly there, with his arms ex-
tended before him,
She standing graceful, erect, and winding the
thread from his fingers,
Sometimes chiding a little his clumsy manner
of holding,
Sometimes touching his hands, as she disen-
tangled expertly
Twist or knot in the yarn, unawares—for how
could she help it ?—

Sending electrical thrills through every nerve
in his body.

Lo ! in the midst of this scene, a breathless
messenger entered,
Bringing in hurry and heat the terrible news
from the village.

Yes ; Miles Standish was dead !—an Indian
had brought them the tidings,—

Slain by a poisoned arrow, shot down in the
front of the battle,

Into an ambush beguiled, cut off with the
whole of his forces ;

All the town would be burned, and all the peo-
ple be murdered !

Such were the tidings of evil that burst on the
hearts of the hearers.

Silent and statue-like stood Priscilla, her face
looking backward

Still at the face of the speaker, her arms up-
lifted in horror ;

But John Alden, upstarting, as if the barb of
the arrow

Piercing the heart of his friend had struck his
own, and had sundered

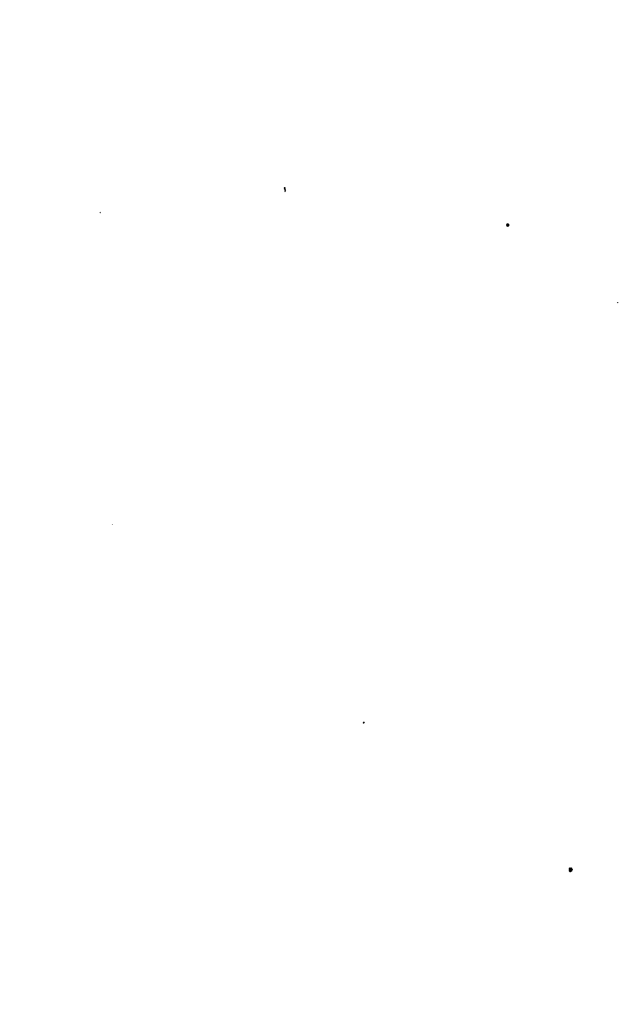
Once and for ever the bonds that held him
bound as a captive,

While with excess of sensation, the awful de-
light of his freedom,

Mingled with pain and regret, unconscious of
what he was doing,

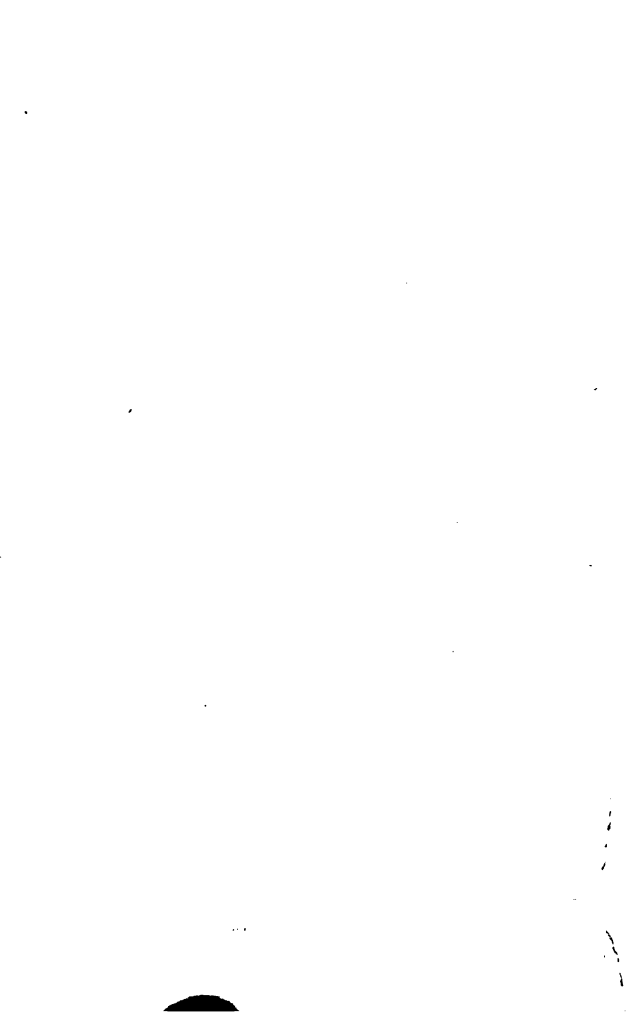
Clasped, almost with a groan, the motionless
form of Priscilla,
Pressing her close to his heart, as for ever his
own, and exclaiming :
"Those whom the Lord hath united, let no
man put them asunder !"

Even as rivulets twain, from distant and
separate sources,
Seeing each other afar, as they leap from the
rocks, and pursuing
Each one its devious path, but drawing nearer
and nearer,
Rush together at last, at their trysting-place in
the forest ;
So these lives that had run thus far in separate
channels,
Coming in sight of each other, then swerving
and flowing asunder,
Parted by barriers strong, but drawing nearer
and nearer,
Rushed together at last, and one was lost in
the other.



IX.

The Wedding-Day.



IX.

THE WEDDING-DAY.

FORTH from the curtain of clouds, from the
tent of purple and scarlet,
Issued the sun, the great High-Priest, in his
garments resplendent,
Holiness unto the Lord, in letters of light, on
his forehead,
Round the hem of his robe the golden bells
and pomegranates.
Blessing the world he came, and the bars of
vapour beneath him
Gleamed like a grate of brass, and the sea at
his feet was a laver !

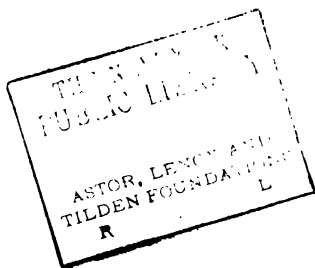
This was the wedding morn of Priscilla the
Puritan maiden.
Friends were assembled together ; the Elder
and Magistrate also
Graced the scene with their presence, and
stood like the Law and the Gospel,
One with the sanction of earth and one with
the blessing of heaven.
Simple and brief was the wedding, as that of
Ruth and of Boaz.

Softly the youth and the maiden repeated the
words of betrothal,
Taking each other for husband and wife in the
Magistrate's presence,
After the Puritan way, and the laudable cus-
tom of Holland.
Fervently then, and devoutly, the excellent
Elder of Plymouth,
Prayed for the hearth and the home, that were
founded that day in affection,
Speaking of life and of death, and imploring
divine benedictions.

Lo ! when the service was ended, a form ap-
peared on the threshold,
Clad in armour of steel, a sombre and sorrowful
figure !
Why does the bridegroom start and stare at the
strange apparition ?
Why does the bride turn pale, and hide her
face on his shoulder ?
Is it a phantom of air,—a bodiless, spectral illu-
sion ?
Is it a ghost from the grave, that has come to
forbid the betrothal ?
Long had it stood there unseen, a guest unin-
vited, unwelcomed ;
Over its clouded eyes there had passed at times
an expression
Softening the gloom and revealing the warm
heart hidden beneath them,



"A FORM APPEARED ON THE THRESHOLD."



As when across the sky the driving rack of the
rain-cloud
Grows for a moment thin, and betrays the sun
by its brightness.
Once it had lifted its hand, and moved its lips,
but was silent,
As if an iron will had mastered the fleeting in-
tention.
But when were ended the troth and the prayer
and the last benediction,
Into the room it strode, and the people beheld
with amazement
Bodily there in his armour Miles Standish, the
Captain of Plymouth !
Grasping the bridegroom's hand, he said with
emotion, " Forgive me !
I have been angry and hurt,—too long have I
cherished the feeling ;
I have been cruel and hard, but now, thank
God ! it is ended.
Mine is the same hot blood that leaped in the
veins of Hugh Standish,
Sensitive, swift to resent, but as swift in aton-
ing for error.
Never so much as now was Miles Standish the
friend of John Alden."
Thereupon answered the bridegroom : " Let all
be forgotten between us,—
All save the dear, old friendship, and that shall
grow older and dearer !"
Then the Captain advanced, and, bowing,
saluted Priscilla,

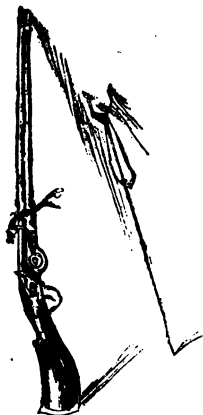
Gravely and after the manner of old-fashioned
gentry in England,
Something of camp and of court, of town and
of country, commingled,
Wishing her joy of her wedding, and loudly
lauding her husband.



Then he said with a smile : " I should have re-
membered the adage,—
If you would be well served, you must serve
yourself ; and moreover,
No man can gather cherries in Kent at the sea-
son of Christmas ! "

.....
Great was the people's amazement, and
greater yet their rejoicing,
Thus to behold once more the sun-burnt face
of their Captain,
Whom they had mourned as dead ; and they
gathered and crowded about him,
Lager to see him and hear him, forgetful of
bride and of bridegroom,
Questioning, answering, laughing, and each
interrupting the other,
Till the good Captain declared, being quite
overpowered and bewildered,
He had rather by far break into an Indian en-
campment,
Than come again to a wedding to which he
had not been invited.
Meanwhile the bridegroom went forth and
stood with the bride at the doorway,
Breathing the perfumed air of that warm and
beautiful morning.
Touched with autumnal tints, but lonely and
sad in the sunshine,
Lay extended before them the land of toil and
privation ;
There were the graves of the dead, and the
barren waste of the sea-shore,
There the familiar fields, the groves of pine,
and the meadows ;
But to their eyes transfigured, it seemed as the
Garden of Eden,
Filled with the presence of God, whose voice
was the sound of the ocean.

Soon was their vision disturbed by the noise
 and stir of departure,
 Friends coming forth from the house, and im-
 patient of longer delaying,



Each with his plan for the day, and the work
 that was left uncompleted.
 Then from a stall near at hand, amid exclama-
 tions of wonder,
 Alden the thoughtful, the careful, so happy,
 so proud of Priscilla,

Brought out his snow-white steer, obeying
the hand of its master,
Led by a cord that was tied to an iron ring in
its nostrils,
Covered with crimson cloth, and a cushion
placed for a saddle.
She should not walk, he said, through the dust
and heat of the noonday;
Nay, she should ride like a queen, not plod
along like a peasant.
Somewhat alarmed at first, but reassured by
the others,
Placing her hand on the cushion, her foot in
the hand of her husband,
Gayly, with joyous laugh, Priscilla mounted
her palfrey.
"Nothing is wanting now," he said with a
smile, "but the distaff;
Then you would be in truth my queen, my
beautiful Bertha!"

Onward the bridal procession now moved to
their new habitation,
Happy husband and wife, and friends con-
versing together.
Pleasantly murmured the brook, as they crossed
the ford in the forest,
Pleased with the image that passed, like a
dream of love through its bosom,
Tremulous, floating in air, o'er the depths of
the azure abysses.

Down through the golden leaves the sun was
pouring his splendours,
Gleaming on purple grapes, that, from branches
above them suspended,
Mingled their odorous breath with the balm
of the pine and the fir-tree
Wild and sweet as the clusters that grew in
the valley of Eshcol.
Like a picture it seemed of the primitive,
pastoral ages,
Fresh with the youth of the world, and recalling
Rebecca and Isaac,
Old and yet ever new, and simple and beautiful
always,
Love immortal and young in the endless succession
of lovers.
So through the Plymouth woods passed onward
the bridal procession.

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